

Younger Artists Series

Ernest Fiene

Edited by William Murrell

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YOUNGER ARTISTS SERIES

NUMBER 1

ERNEST FIENE

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YOUNGER ARTISTS SERIES

NUMBER 1

ERNEST FIENE

BY

WILLIAM MURRELL

WITH FRONTISPIECE IN COLOR AND
30 REPRODUCTIONS IN BLACK AND WHITE

WITH A GENERAL INTRODUCTION BY
HAROLD WARD

WOODSTOCK, N. Y. 1922
PUBLISHED BY WILLIAM M. FISHER

YOUNGER ARTISTS SERIES

Already Published

Nr. 1 Ernest Fiene

Nr. 2 Alexander Brook

Nr. 3 Peggy Bacon

Nr. 4 Yasuo Kuniyoshi

In Preparation

Nr. 5 Henry Lee Mac Fee

Nr. 6 Ben Benn

Nr. 7 Edward Fisk

Nr. 8 Henry Mattson

A G e n e r a l I n t r o d u c t i o n

The artists who receive consideration in the various monographs of this series represent tendencies as diverse as the poles. Most of them are young, many of them are quite unknown save to a very few interested spectators, but none of them finds either his youth or his obscurity any bar to the one motive that inspires his efforts. This motive, which is also the sole criterion whereby the editor has sought to estimate the value of their work, may be summed up in the words, »A vivid and dynamic expression of an individuality in terms of a plastic medium.«

As corollary to the above formula, although rather implied than anywhere definitely stated, there is throughout an attitude of entire indifference to the traditional values of truth or beauty or sincerity. This indifference arises, not from hostility, or bravade, but simply from a conviction that such values tend ever to a static or moral interpretation of the things upon which they are called to sit in judgment. And any interpretation of the work produced through the efficient functioning of a powerful intelligence or a highly

sensitive temperament becomes vicious and sterile at the moment it ceases to regard every individual as not only profoundly different from all others, but as changing, subtly and incalculably, within himself.

For this reason the brief sketch prefacing the reproductions of each artist's work is devoid of even the intention of aesthetic criticism. The man is introduced quietly, emphasis being placed upon such traits of character as made him noticeable to the writer, who, as an observer, was as much interested in the human being as in the artist that struggles with idiosyncrasies and limitations. This done, it is the artist's turn, in the pages that follow, to state in his own language what he has discovered about himself and the world which this intangible self perceives. In time he may achieve a more lucid, unique and definite statement: or — since those who would create are always the favorites of tragedy, — he may be retired into the silence and shadow of the inadequate. It does not matter, inasmuch as his work, as it now stands, is of enduring value to those who are patient to seek and swift to appreciate the brilliant jewel of an authentic utterance.

Harold Ward.

ERNEST FIENE

Ernest Fiene (born in Rhineland in 1894) has the big solid frame and capable hands of the practical man; his countenance is open and his manner is candid, but his eyes are those of a dreamer. In his personal contacts he is honest, simple, and loyal; highly sensitive and quick to moods, sympathetic and otherwise.

For the rest, he is all painter. A romantic with a strong, unaffected faith in his own vision of the world, untainted by any intellectual or aesthetic theories, he paints his way through difficulties that arise. He feels his course towards plastic and chromatic achievement with his brushes in his hands. He recognizes any hint of what he is aiming for the instant it appears upon the canvas, and works into and from it. He denies to words, and

hence to thought, the power of pre=visaging the distinctly plastic things of art.

His is an essentially visual imagination, but one that takes no flights. The fantastic and the grotesque amuse but do not interest him. He is sane, tenacious, solid. He does not evoke, he builds. His simplicity is devoid of naivete.

Although he is an excellent craftsman, there is nothing of the virtuoso about his canvases: the epic grandeur of some of them is quite free from »grand mannerism«. Into the fine solidity of his form and the brooding warmth of his color there is always infused a mood of intense and sustained power. It is no trick of technique, no subtle softnesses of twilight tones. These are all clear, forceful, well-conceived, and ably-painted canvases, but Fiene has somehow enriched them in the painting by something from himself. That something is not without analogy in music: it is the effect <occasionally a little »beyond the range of the instruments«> demanded of orchestras by some composers and actually produced by some conductors. It is the forcing of a recalcitrant medium not only to do the will of the artist but to take on the color of his personality in moods of sustained intensity.

In these landscape, portrait, and still-life canvases of Fiene's there is evident a great love of tactile quality; the treatment throughout is sensuous, and it is all but indisputable that the subtle forms of radiant flesh will claim increasingly more of his attention and allegiance.

ERNEST FIENE
REPRODUCTIONS

Frontispiece in Color — Still-Life (Water-Color)

Paintings and Water-Colors:

1. November Landscape
2. Autumn
3. Harlem River
4. Maine Landscape
5. Water-Color
6. Zinnias and Apples
7. Sea in Recoil
8. Farmer
9. Landscape before Rain
10. Apple-Blossoms
11. Wood-Interior
12. Landscape
13. Woodstock Landscape
14. Gypsy
15. Study in Color
16. Plowed Field
17. Woman in Pink
18. Nudes
19. Willow Trees
20. Fifth Avenue in Rain
21. Bathers
22. Zinnias
23. Portrait of Paul Arndt

24. Autumn Hillside
25. Winter
26. Still=Life on Stone Mantel
27. Summer Landscape
28. Valley in the Catskills
29. Sun=shower
30. Portrait of Christine Chaplin



NOVEMBER LANDSCAPE

OIL 1915



AUTUMN

Oil 1820



HARLEM RIVER

Oil 1920



MAINE LANDSCAPE

Oil 1921



WATER-FALL

Oil 1921



ZINNIAS AND APPLES



SEA IN RECOIL

Oil 1922



FARMER

Oil 1920



LANDSCAPE BEFORE RAIN

Oil 1921



APPLE-BLOSSOMS

Oil 1821



WOOD-INTERIOR

Oil 1921



LANDSCAPE

OIL 1921



WOODSTOCK LANDSCAPE

Oil 1921



GYPSY

Watercolor 1920



STUDY IN COLOR

Oil 1921



PLOWED FIELD

Oil 1921



WOMAN IN PINK

Oil 1921



NUDES

Oil 1919



WILLOW TREES

Oil 1921



FIFTH AVENUE IN RAIN

Watercolor 1919

(Owned by Alfred M. Schaffer)



BATHERS

Watercolor 1918



ZINNIAS

Watercolor 1919



PORTRAIT OF PAUL ARNDT

Oil 1921



AUTUMN HILLSIDE



WINTER

Oil 1922



THE VALLEY IN THE CATSKILLS

Oil 1921



SUN-SHOWER

(Owned by Miss R. Jones)

Oil 1921



PORTRAIT OF CHRISTINE CHAPLIN

Oil 1921

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Murrell, William/Ernest Flene

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